



Lt. Col. Charles M. Cromwell, battalion commander, 1st Recruit Training Battalion, center, inspects the new Marines of Company C, during the Battalion Commander's Inspection. The Battalion Commander's Inspection is the final requirement new Marines must complete to graduate from recruit training. *Sgt Shawn Dickens/Chevron*



A new Marine prepares his rifle for inspection during the Battalion Commander's Inspection. During the inspection, the Marines are graded on personal appearance, weapon cleanliness, and knowledge. *Sgt Shawn Dickens/Chevron*



A drill instructor fixes a new Marine's cover during the Battalion Commander's Inspection. Before the final inspection, Marines look over each other's shoulders. *Sgt Shawn Dickens/Chevron*



A Marine holds the clipboard containing the grading sheet during the Battalion Commander's Inspection. A recruit allowed more than three negative marks during the inspection. *Sgt Shawn Dickens/Chevron*



Inspection on the depot's Shepherd Memorial Drill Field, April 20. The Bat-



the preparation for the Battalion Commander's Inspection, April 20. other to ensure their uniforms are in perfect condition.



ing sheet for the Battalion Commander's Inspection. Marines are not e inspection. More than three results in a failing grade.

✓ The Final Test

Charlie Company recruits complete the Battalion Commander's Inspection before departing depot

By CPL SHAWN DICKENS
Chevron staff

For the young men of Company C, 1st Battalion, who are claiming the title of Marine today, it may seem like an eternity since that first night on the yellow footprints here at Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego and their first experience of recruit training.

After their night of controlled chaos, the recruits have been moving nonstop toward their goal of walking across the parade deck proudly as Marines.

Their drill instructors have spent the last 13 weeks molding the young men into basically trained Marines – teaching them close-order drill, hand-to-hand combat, rifle marksmanship, and the history of the Corps.

The drill instructors have also passed on the meaning of the Marine core values of honor, courage and commitment.

Since that first night on the yellow footprints, every hour of training has been to prepare the new Marines for their final tests of recruit training.

One major test is the Crucible a 54-hour training evolution in which recruits put to test all the leadership and physical training they have received during recruit training. They receive rationed food and are deprived of sleep to simulate a combat environment and test their ability to accomplish tasks in a high stress environment.

After the completion of the Cru-

cible, the young men receive their eagle, globe and anchor emblem and are called Marines, but still must undergo the Battalion Commander's Inspection to evaluate if they are ready to graduate.

Before the inspection, the recruits underwent the Senior Drill Instructors Inspection and the Company Commander's Inspection.

"The Battalion Commander's Inspection is the final step in the training process," said Lt. Col. C. M. Cromwell, battalion commander, 1st recruit training battalion. "It evaluates that the Marine is indeed ready to graduate."

During the inspection, the inspecting officer or drill instructor evaluates the Marine's appearance in uniform while the Marine is asked questions on Marine Corps knowledge, such as the maximum effective range of their rifle and the proper measurements of uniform articles, such as belt length and trouser length. They are also asked personal questions such as if they have family members coming to graduation or why they joined the Marine Corps.

The questions are designed to not only test whether the new Marines have retained the basic knowledge they have been taught throughout recruit training, but also to test their military bearing.

"As Marines, they will be required to interact with officers," said Cromwell. "The Battalion Commander's Inspection ensures that they will be able to conduct themselves with proper bearing and not be intimidated when dealing with higher ranks."



A group of M16-A2 service rifles stand to the side as their owners assist in the Battalion Commander's Inspection. During the inspection, a few of the new Marines act as scribes and keep their fellow Marines' scores before being inspected themselves.

Sgt Shawn Dickens/Chevron